

Maternity Hospital Comments for Cesarean Sections, Primary Cesarean Sections, and VBACs (Vaginal Births after Cesarean Sections)

Anna Jaques Hospital
BI Deaconess Medical Center
Brigham and Women's Hospital
Brockton Hospital
Caritas Good Samaritan Medical Center
Caritas Holy Family Hospital
Caritas Norwood Hospital
Caritas St. Elizabeth's Medical Center
Hallmark Health System – Melrose-Wakefield Hospital
Heywood Hospital
Holyoke Hospital
Massachusetts General Hospital
Morton Hospital and Medical Center
Nantucket Cottage Hospital
Newton-Wellesley Hospital
North Shore Medical Center – Salem
North Shore Medical Center – Union
Saints Memorial Medical Center
South Shore Hospital
Southcoast Hospitals Group
Sturdy Memorial Hospital
Winchester Hospital

Anna Jaques Hospital

All Cesarean Section: Total Cesarean Sections = 234 Total births = 814
Primary Cesarean Section: 16% Repeat Cesarean Section: 73%
Vaginal Birth After Cesarean Section (VBAC): 25%

BI Deaconess Medical Center

Vaginal Birth After Cesarean Section (VBAC): The practice of vaginal birth after cesarean section is now controversial, and the subject of current debate in the medical literature.

Brigham and Women's Hospital

All Cesarean Section:

Brigham and Women's Hospital feels that this measure is not a reflection of hospital quality, and there is no precedence for the use of these measures to assess hospital quality. Brigham and Women's Hospital believes that the best method of delivery depends upon patient characteristics, patient history, and in consultation with her provider, a patient's careful evaluation of the risks and benefits of alternate routes of delivery. These complexities make it impossible to determine an optimal rate for a hospital and render comparisons of hospitals inappropriate.

Primary Cesarean Section:

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Vaginal Birth After Cesarean Section (VBAC):

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Brockton Hospital

Caritas Good Samaritan Medical Center

All Cesarean Section: 306/915

Primary Cesarean Section: 185/789

Vaginal Birth After Cesarean Section (VBAC): 16/138

Caritas Holy Family Hospital

All Cesarean Section: mismatch – our data 474/1257

Primary Cesarean Section: mismatch – our data 306/1143

Vaginal Birth After Cesarean Section (VBAC): mismatch- our data 12/181

Caritas Norwood Hospital

All Cesarean Section: total mismatch – our data 195/605

Primary Cesarean Section: total mismatch – our data 130/573

Vaginal Birth After Cesarean Section (VBAC): 19/83 – total mismatch

Caritas St. Elizabeth's Medical Center

All Cesarean Section: total mismatch – our data 460/1207

Primary Cesarean Section: total mismatch – our data 287/1189

Vaginal Birth After Cesarean Section (VBAC): 20/189 – denominator higher in our database

Hallmark H. S. – Melrose-Wakefield Hospital

Heywood Hospital ([Link to General Comments](#))

All Cesarean Section: 572 deliveries / 101 C-sections in total

Primary Cesarean Section: 26 primary C-sections out of 536 births (previous C-sections excluded from denominator)

Vaginal Birth After Cesarean Section (VBAC): 19 VBACs out of 65 previous C-sections

Holyoke Hospital

Primary Cesarean Section: Midwifery care as well as Birthing Unit nurse support, provide the laboring mother with comfort options that reduce the need to opt for c-section.

Massachusetts General Hospital

All Cesarean Section:

The MGH Obstetric team does not support the use of cesarean section delivery rates as measures of hospital quality. The decision to undertake a cesarean delivery depends on individual patient and pregnancy characteristics and history and, in consultation with her provider, a patient's careful evaluation of the risks and benefits of alternate routes of delivery. In some cases, patients and providers will decide that a small risk to mother or baby warrants cesarean delivery. In other cases, a similar small risk may be judged acceptable and lead doctors and patients to make different plans. Because such evaluations of risks and benefits are embedded with personal values that are indiscernible from review of administrative data sets and because individual patient variables, risks and histories are not considered in presenting gross cesarean rates, we believe that defining optimal rates for an single hospital, much less a state health system, is simply not possible. Absent such a benchmark, we see no appropriate way in which cesarean rates or their comparison can be used to reflect hospital quality.

Primary Cesarean Section:

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Vaginal Birth After Cesarean Section (VBAC):

The MGH obstetric team does not support the use of VBAC rate as helpful measure of hospital quality. There was a time when increasing rates of VBAC was seen as favorable. The thinking was that a woman who had delivered via cesarean section should be able, barring certain circumstances, to have a vaginal birth in the future. The last decade has taught the obstetric community a great deal about the safety of VBAC and the indications for VBAC are evolving. The general trend is to be more selective in making that recommendation and to ensure that facilities are properly equipped with staff and operating room availability to provide the back-up cesarean section if needed. We don't think it is appropriate to hold out a measure of VBAC rates as a quality indicator as it may be misleading to prospective mothers and their families. The type of delivery should be a personal decision and made under the guidance of a well-informed, up to date obstetrician or midwife. At MGH we certainly have the staff and facilities to safely and confidently offer VBAC for appropriate patients, but we do not think that using this metric as a yardstick of hospital quality makes sense given current science.

Morton Hospital and Medical Center

Nantucket Cottage Hospital

Newton-Wellesley Hospital

For OB indicators: Of all the indicators listed, NWH feels that the obstetrical indicators in particular do not reflect hospital quality. In addition, we know of no precedence for the use of these measures to assess quality. We believe that the patient's history and personal characteristics along with consultation with her provider will result in the best evaluation of the risks and benefits of the alternate routes of delivery. These individual characteristics and complexities do not allow the data, as presented, to be standardized enough for use as a comparison of quality across hospitals.

North Shore Medical Center - Salem Hospital

The Agency of Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) developed these measures in 2003 with the intention that hospitals use this information to facilitate quality improvement initiatives within their facilities; they were not intended to evaluate or compare hospitals. NSMC - Salem Hospital applauds the efforts of AHRQ but cautions that these measures are not a reflection of hospital quality, and there is no precedent for the use of these measures to assess quality. NSMC - Salem Hospital believes that the best method of delivery depends upon patient characteristics, patient history, and in consultation with her provider, a patient's careful evaluation of the risks and benefits of alternate routes of delivery. NSMC - Salem Hospital encourages patients to understand all these complexities before deciding which delivery type is most appropriate for them.

Saints Memorial Medical Center

This data is 2 years old. Currently, SMMC rate of C-section is consistent with both state and national rates.

South Shore Hospital

Southcoast Hospitals Group

Sturdy Memorial Hospital

All Cesarean Section: These obstetric metrics are utilization measures only, not quality measures. the methodology here does not match other posted rates. There is no benchmark or standard for "good" or "bad" C-section rates. Sturdy numbers do not match the posted numbers. All MA hospitals have reported maternity statistics to the State for years. See www.mass.gov/dhcfp (Hospital Maternity Information).

Primary Cesarean Section: See above. Sturdy numbers do not match the posted numbers.

Winchester Hospital

All Cesarean Sections – Winchester Hospital's Cesarean Section rate is consistent with expectations and our estimated cost per procedure is in the middle 50% of hospitals in the study.

Primary Cesarean Section – Winchester Hospital's Primary Cesarean Section rate is consistent with expectations and our estimated cost per procedure is in the middle 50% of hospitals in the study.

VBAC – Winchester Hospital's utilization rate for Vaginal Birth after Cesarean ("VBAC") is consistent with expectations and our estimated cost per procedure is in the middle 50% of hospitals in the study.